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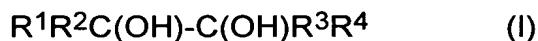
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PCT/EP00/03493

METHOD FOR THE DIHYDROXYLATION OF  
OLEFINS USING TRANSITION METAL CATALYSTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

This invention relates to process for dihydroxylation of olefins using transition metal catalysts to obtain monofunctional, bifunctional, and/or polyfunctional 1,2-diols of the formula (I)



where R<sup>1</sup> to R<sup>4</sup> are defined herein, by reacting an olefin of the formula (II)



where R<sup>1</sup> to R<sup>4</sup> are defined as for formula (I),

with molecular oxygen in the presence of an osmium, ruthenium, or manganese compound in water or a water-containing solvent mixture at a pH of from 7.5 to 13.

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